

THE FALCON CANNOT HEAR THE MALTESE FALCONER

My friend Ray Zepeda wrote himself a note
of an idea for a poem,
"Women I Might Have Had,"
and it fell into the hands of his lady Marcia.

"What the hell is this?" she said;
"who the hell are all these women
that you think you might have had?"
"It was just an idea for a poem," Ray said,

"Yeah, well it sounds like Locklin poem to me."

"That's it!" he said. "It's an idea Locklin
had for a poem!"

"But somehow it got out of Locklin's shirtpocket
and into yours?"

"That's right," he said,
and Marcia walked away,
grinning and shaking her head.

I told him he should have added that, previously,
it had somehow gotten out of Bukowski's pocket
and into mine, and before that
it had mysteriously made its way into Bukowski's pocket
from John Fante's.

Maybe Fante got it out of Dreiser's pocket
or maybe Mencken's.

The literary dicks haven't got a line
on Fante yet.

POEM SHORTER THAN ITS EPIGRAPH

"But knowing now how they both (Plath and Berryman)
died, I can no longer believe that any art -- even
that as fine as they produced at their best -- is
worth the terrible cost." -- A. Alvarez

Apparently they both thought otherwise.

-- Gerald Locklin

Long Beach CA